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Department of
Natural Resources

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PRESS RELEASE

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Road improvements planned on Cache Creek Road near Fairbanks

(Fairbanks, AK) – The Alaska Division of Forestry and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game are partnering to repair more than 10 miles of Cache Creek Road that will increase access to the Tanana Valley State Forest west of Fairbanks.

Located off Murphy Dome Road approximately 15 miles west of Fairbanks, Cache Creek Road is part of the Tanana Valley State Forest road system that covers more than 250 miles in the Tok-Delta-Fairbanks Area. It and other forestry roads are used by multiple user groups, including hunters, loggers, firewood cutters, property owners, recreationalists, and berry pickers. The road has seen heavy use and needs repair to ensure its long-term durability.

The project, planned for the summer of 2022, includes replacing the Fortune Creek Bridge near Mile 10.5 of the approximately 14-mile road. The bridge, built in 1991, has been closed for at least 10 years after being deemed unsafe. Replacing the bridge will restore and improve access for land managers, hunters, and the public to safely use the forest, and will support heavy hunter and recreation traffic, as well as future timber harvests. Future maintenance and upgrades to the 4 miles of road beyond the bridge will coincide with future timber sales.

The project, which is expected to cost between \$1 and \$2.5 million, is currently in the planning phase and will be put out to bid later this winter. Construction is anticipated to take place from May to August 2022. The road will be closed for the length of the project but DOF will be working with local residents who use the road regularly to access their properties. ADF&G will be working with hunters and advisory committees to ensure that those user groups are prepared for the road closure this summer, particularly spring bear hunters and fall grouse hunters. Actual construction timeframes will be released once they have been finalized.

“The restrictions are necessary to ensure the safety of the public and contractor,” Fairbanks-Delta Area Forester Matthew Stevens said. “Heavy equipment will be used to haul in material, grade the road surface, remove the old bridge and install the new bridge, making travel by the public unsafe.

“We recognize the inconvenience this will be to hunters, wood cutters, local residents and other Forest users this coming summer,” Stevens added, “Unfortunately, to complete this project during the short construction season, the road will need to be closed for a significant period of time. Hopefully, the long-term benefits will far outweigh

the short-term inconvenience by providing better access to the Forest for all user groups.”

More information will be released via public notices, social media and news articles as the project reaches finalization.

Funding for the project comes from a 2018 federal grant through the Department of Fish and Game under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program authorized by the Pittman-Robertson Act, and is funded by taxes on the sale of firearms, ammunition and archery equipment. The federal grant will augment \$500,000 in 2015 state capital improvement match funds to resurface damaged portions of the road, improve drainage, and address safety issues. The bulk of those matching funds - \$360,000 – is coming from ADF&G funds generated by the sale of hunting licenses and drawing permit tag fees while the remainder is coming from the Tanana Valley Emergency Road Fund.

To learn more, visit the project website:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hunteraccess.tananavalley>

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